BENGALURU, SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 28 | Min 22 | Humidity 69% Mostly cloudy Sensex 75,527 | Nifty 23,622 | Gold 1,49,963 | Silver 2,41,159 | Dollar 95.24 | Euro 110.12 | GBP 127.64

BUILDING BLOCKS

Educationists vouch for Kannada nursery rhymes as they say children should be introduced to vocabulary used at home in first years of learning

PAGE 6

CHOPPING BOARD

Conservationists urge caution after proposal targets 197 trees that may be threat to Hesaraghatta reservoir embankment

PAGE 7

After oora habba festivities stir up conversations, we take a look at significance of these centuries-old community celebrations that are undeniably woven into the fabric of city even in face of rapid urbanisation

ALL GOOD IN THE HOOD

Festivals linked to local temples, neighbourhood identities are way to offer prayers, celebrate and strengthen social bonds

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A social media post questioning a late-night oora habba celebration in JP Nagar sparked a wave of reactions online, with many users defending the cultural significance of such festivals while others echoed concerns over noise and public inconvenience.

The controversy began after a Bengaluru social media user posted about hearing "firecrackers, drums, the whole works" in JP Nagar 7th Phase shortly after midnight. In the post, the user questioned how organisers had obtained permission for the event on a working day and tagged Bengaluru Police seeking an explanation. The post quickly gained traction, drawing thousands of views and prompting a broader discussion on the place of traditional village festivals within a rapidly urbanising city.

Many commenters criticised the post, arguing that oora habbas are centuries-old community celebrations that predate the development of modern residential layouts in Bengaluru. Users pointed out that such festivals are deeply tied to local temples, neighbourhood identities and cultural traditions, and occur only for a limited period each year. Some respondents accused the author of being insensitive to local customs and urged residents to understand the cultural history of the areas they live in.

The debate has once again highlighted the tensions between preserving local cultural practices and addressing the expectations of a growing urban population.

In conversation with Bangalore Mirror, Dr Rajeev Nrupathunga from Revival

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

"Playing loud instruments was believed to ward off ancestral negative energies and the event (habba) itself created a sense of positivity. The few days of festivities created an atmosphere that helped strengthen interpersonal bonds and one's spirituality

—Dr Rajeev Nrupathunga, Revival Heritage Hub

Dread drunk

71% of men who return home drunk abuse their wives, K'taka govt report reveals

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A report released by the Karnataka government has revealed a disturbing link between alcohol addiction and violence against women within households. According to the Excise Reforms 2026 report, among men who consume alcohol daily and return home intoxicated, nearly 71% were found to subject their wives to physical or emotional abuse. Even among occasional drinkers, 46% were reported to engage in violence against spouses or women family members.

The report further noted that 33% of men who consume alcohol but do not return home intoxicated also abuse their wives, while 23% of non-drinkers were found involved in domestic violence. The findings underline that the frequency, quantity, and severity of alcohol consumption significantly increase the risk of abuse against women.

The report, prepared on the basis of data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and recommendations of a state-appointed resource mobilisation committee, exposes the dark social consequences behind Karnataka's growing liquor

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Musical evening

Music lovers can look forward to the Nadasurabhi June Concert featuring noted Carnatic vocalist Nisha Rajagopalan and accompanying artistes. Entry is free and free parking will be available for attendees. **Where: St. John's Medical College Campus, Koramangala; When: June 21, 4.15 pm**

02 Denim fest returns

Nexus Select Malls in Bengaluru has launched the fourth edition of the Denim & Sneaker Fest with a live concert by Yerd Plate Dose. The festival will feature street wear collections, sneaker drops, shopping offers, giveaways and immersive fashion experiences across the mall. **Where: Nexus Mall, Koramangala; When: Running till June 15**

03 Yoga marathon

To mark International Yoga Day, Nexus Shantiniketan Mall will host Yogathon 2026. Organised in association with The Art of Living Foundation, the event will feature guided yoga sessions, breathing exercises, meditation practices and wellness interactions led by experienced instructors. **Where: Nexus Shantiniketan Mall, Whitefield; When: June 21, 6.30 am to 9.30 am**

04 Art speaks

To commemorate the 75th birth anniversary of renowned cartoonist Maya Kamath, the Indian Institute of Cartoonistsis hosting an exhibition featuring 150 international cartoons selected from entries to the International Maya Kamath Memorial Cartoon Contest 2026. Centred on the theme of gender equality and women's rights. **Where: Indian Cartoon Gallery, Midford Garden Road; When: Running until June 27, 10 am to 6 pm**

05 Waste warriors

Hasiru Habba 2026 is an annual event celebrating waste workers as environmental stewards and key contributors to sustainable cities. Marking World Environment Day, it brings together waste workers, officials, environmental leaders and citizens to recognise their role in waste management, resource recovery and climate action. **Where: Freedom Park, Seshadri Road; When: June 17, 11 am to 1 pm**

State to employ textbook method to build character

Schools to teach character-building lessons as authorities launch programme promoting ethics, resilience, civic awareness and practical decision-making

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In a major shift aimed at nurturing responsible and emotionally balanced students, the State Government will introduce value education classes for students in Classes 1 to 10 in all government primary and secondary schools from the 2026–27 academic year. The initiative seeks to strengthen ethics, human values, social responsibility and life skills among children at a time when educators are increasingly concerned about behavioural and emotional challenges faced by students.

The Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT) has already begun preparations for the rollout and has trained nearly one lakh teachers in the new curriculum. Training programmes for the remaining teachers across the State are also being planned to ensure smooth implementation.

An official said, "The value education programme has been designed as a structured, activity-based learning module and will be integrated into the school timetable, with one dedicated period each week. Teachers have been instructed to make value education a compulsory classroom activity and to incorporate its concepts into regular subject teaching wherever possible. Bilingual textbooks and resource handbooks have been prepared to support classroom delivery and help teachers engage students effectively through practical learning methods rather than conventional lectures."

The curriculum focuses on 10 core values and several related sub-values, covering areas such as respect, honesty, integrity, emotional intelligence, empathy, diversity, equality, gender sensitivity, scientific temper, creativity, critical thinking, sustainable living, environmental awareness, civic responsibility and personal safety. In all, 234 activities have been incorporated into the textbooks to help students understand and practise these values in their everyday lives.

The programme also draws on life skills identified by the World Health Organization, including self-awareness, empathy, problem-solving and decision-making, with the aim of helping children develop stronger emotional resilience and social skills.

Officials believe the initiative will go beyond textbook learning and contribute to students' overall personality development. Activities have been designed to help children understand discipline, self-control, cooperation and important life lessons, while also addressing emotional and psychological well-being. Teachers will be encouraged to observe behavioural changes among students and assess how effectively they are adopting the values taught in the classroom.

"To monitor the impact of the programme, schools will maintain continuous records of student participation, behavioural development and attitudinal changes through a comprehensive progress-reporting system. Teachers have been asked to track students' levels of interest and document observable changes over time. These assessments will form part of students' holistic progress records, enabling schools to evaluate not only academic performance but also character development," the official said.

Nearly one lakh educators trained, weekly sessions, activity-based learning and progress tracking aim to strengthen emotional wellbeing

DSERT Director-in-Charge Anita V Nazare said the department was preparing for statewide implementation and was committed to equipping teachers with the necessary training and resources to make value education an integral part of school learning across the State.

New liquor tax regime drives record revenue

The new excise policy, which taxes liquor based on Alcohol in Beverage (AIB) content, has delivered a record-breaking start, generating ₹3,509 crore in revenue within just one month of its rollout. Despite steep price increases for several low-cost liquor brands under the new system, sales remained robust. Beer emerged as the biggest beneficiary, with sales surging 59.4% year-on-year to 403.1 lakh litres between May 11 and June 11, while Indian Made Liquor (IML) sales also rose to 443.5 lakh litres. Total liquor revenue during the period increased from ₹3,022 crore a year earlier to ₹3,509 crore.

Introduced on May 11, the AIB-based taxation model replaces Karnataka's decades-old bulk-litre slab system and is being touted as a global "gold standard" in liquor taxation. The government reduced the number of excise tax slabs from 16 to eight, simplifying the structure while boosting revenue collections. Excise officials said the sharp rise in beer sales was largely driven by lower prices in that segment under the revised tax regime, helping to offset concerns that higher liquor prices could dampen demand. — BMB

Veterinary College station dropped from red line plan

In a fresh cost-cutting measure for Bengaluru's proposed Hebbal–Sarjapur Metro Red Line (Phase 3A), BMRCL has decided to drop the planned Veterinary College station between Maitreya Circle and Ganganagar. The move comes after the agency reduced the length of underground stations to lower project costs. While transport experts claim the station was removed to improve the project's chances of securing Central approval, officials maintain that the decision was taken solely to reduce expenditure. The 36.59-km corridor, comprising 14.28 km of underground and 23.52 km of elevated sections, will connect Sarjapur's IT hub with Hebbal via key areas, including the CBD and Koramangala.

The State Government has approved the Red Line project, now estimated to cost around ₹25,999 crore, but it still awaits clearance from the Centre. After the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs sought a review of project costs, BMRCL engaged a French consultancy, which recommended shorter underground stations, reducing the project estimate by nearly ₹2,920 crore to ₹25,485 crore. As part of the revised proposal submitted to the Centre in April, the station was dropped. Meanwhile, BMRCL has tasked the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee with studying the feasibility of a fully double-decker corridor. The Centre has raised concerns that double-decker designs could encourage private vehicle use, reduce Metro ridership, and dilute the project's social and economic benefits. — BMB

Ricky Rai in dock again over viral luxury car racing video

After Ricky Muthappa Rai's alleged "donut" stunts at Anil Kumble Circle went viral, the Devanahalli Traffic Police have issued a notice to him over allegations of reckless driving and vehicle modification violations near Kempegowda International Airport (KIA). Police said a luxury car featured in viral social media videos was allegedly driven dangerously on a public road near KIA around 12.09 am on May 20. The footage purportedly showed speeding, excessive noise and flames from the vehicle, raising concerns over public safety. Officials said a preliminary examination indicated possible violations of the Motor Vehicles Act, including dangerous driving, unauthorised modifications and breaches of noise and safety standards. Police are also examining action under Section 281 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to rash or negligent driving. Rai has been directed to appear before the Devanahalli Traffic Police within three days with the vehicle and relevant documents. Failure to respond could invite further legal action. — BMB

Six killed, seven injured in road accidents across B'luru

BLOODBATH ON BENGALURU ROADS At least six people were killed and seven others injured in four separate road accidents reported from Kengeri, Whitefield, Mysuru Road and Hoskote traffic police limits on Saturday morning, with police attributing the crashes to a combination of overspeeding, reckless driving, loss of vehicle control, and poor road conditions in certain stretches

Kengeri: Two nursing students killed in crash

Two nursing students were killed in road accident after their bike crashed into the road divider near R R Dental college in Challaghatta on Mysore Road in the early hours of Saturday

The first accident took place around 2 am, in which two nursing students from Kerala died after their motorcycle crashed into a road median near RR Dental College in Kengeri early Saturday.

The deceased were identified as Atul and Gaurishankar, both nursing students in Bengaluru.

According to police, the duo was travelling on a motorcycle from Mysuru towards Bengaluru when the accident occurred. Near RR Dental College, the rider reportedly lost control of the bike, causing it to ram into the road median with heavy impact. Both students sustained severe injuries and died on the spot, police said.

Kengeri traffic police rushed to the scene, conducted an inspection, and shifted the bodies for post-mortem examinations. Preliminary findings suggest overspeeding caused by the crash. **BMB**

Whitefield: Water-logged street turns deadly

A routine morning commute turned tragic when a 42-year-old woman died in a road accident after being hit by a school bus on Saturday around 7.45 am under the Whitefield Traffic Police Station limits.

According to police, the deceased, identified as Kantha, a warehouse executive, was riding a two-wheeler from Marathahalli to Siddapura while taking her 16-year-old daughter to school. Following heavy rain on Friday night, the road stretch was waterlogged and riddled with potholes.

While navigating the damaged road, Kantha's scooter hit a pothole and skidded, causing both mother and daughter to fall. Before she could regain her balance, a school bus coming from behind ran over her and dragged her for nearly 10 metres.

Both were rushed to a nearby hospital by passengers. Doctors declared Kantha was brought dead, while her daughter, who sustained minor injuries, received treatment. **BMB**

Mysuru Road: Speeding van overturns, one killed, six injured

In another tragic road accident on Mysuru Road near Indraprastha Apartments in Kengeri, a speeding minivan overturned after ramming two-wheelers, killing one person and injuring six others on Saturday morning.

The accident occurred around 6.45 am, according to a complaint filed by Mallu (23), a fuel station employee and eyewitness. The vehicle was travelling from the RV College side towards Kengeri when the driver reportedly lost control at high speed.

The Eeco minivan first collided with a scooter and a motorcycle moving in the same direction. The impact caused the vehicle to veer off, overturn, and crash into an electric pole on the roadside. Sukhdev (41), a resident of Marathahalli travelling in the van, was thrown out during the impact and fatally crushed when the overturned vehicle fell on him. He died while being shifted to hospital. **BMB**

Hoskote: Two killed in high-speed car crash

In a major road accident on the Bengaluru–Chennai Expressway near Hoskote in the early hours of Saturday, two people were killed after a speeding Mercedes-Benz crashed into a bridge wall.

The deceased were identified as Shazia (25), an employee of a private firm in Bengaluru, and Rizwan, a car dealer. Police said the duo had gone on a late-night drive and were returning after dinner on the HKR Road stretch when the accident occurred near the Dodda Hulluru bridge.

According to police, Rizwan, who was driving, lost control of the vehicle at high speed, causing it to ram into the concrete side wall of the bridge. The impact severely damaged the car. Shazia died on the spot after being trapped inside the vehicle.

Rizwan was thrown off the bridge due to the impact, and his body was later recovered from a water body below. Hoskote Traffic Police are investigating. **BMB**

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Banashankari Temple to get massive multi-level parking

Muzrai Department plans six-to-eight-storey parking complex accommodating up to 700 cars, aiming to reduce congestion around Banashankari Temple significantly

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Thousands of devotees visiting Sri Banashankari Temple may soon find relief from persistent parking woes, as the Muzrai Department has decided to construct a multi-level parking complex within the temple premises to ease chronic congestion in the area. The decision comes amid growing traffic problems on the narrow roads surrounding the temple, particularly on Tuesdays, Fridays and other auspicious days when footfall surges. Hundreds of cars and two-wheelers arrive daily, forcing devotees to park along roadsides and in nearby residential lanes, causing frequent traffic bottlenecks.

At present, only a limited number of vehicles can be accommodated in the open space near the temple's Daasoha Bhavan. As a result, visitors often struggle to find parking close to the shrine. "Finding a spot here on a Friday is an absolute nightmare. Devotees have no choice but to block lanes and park haphazardly. A dedicated parking building will certainly help," said Shankar Gowda, a resident of the area.

According to temple authorities, the proposed facility will be built on a 100x150-foot temple-owned plot and accommodate 600 to 700 cars. The six-to-eight-storey structure will feature an automated multi-level parking system, with around 80 vehicles on each floor, designed to optimise space utilisation and improve vehicle movement.

KAUSHIK JN

Project expected to improve traffic flow around one of Bengaluru's busiest temples

"On festival days and Fridays, buses often get delayed because vehicles are parked on both sides of the road near the temple. If more cars are accommodated inside the complex, traffic flow will improve significantly for everyone
– Ramesh Kumar, BMTC bus conductor

Priority will be given to vehicles belonging to devotees visiting the temple, though authorities may allow public vehicles to use the facility depending on availability. Funded entirely by the temple, the project forms part of a broader infrastructure improvement programme that also includes tile laying and other development works.

"Many devotees come with children and elderly parents, but they end up walking long distances because there is no organised parking nearby. A multi-level parking facility inside the temple premises would make visits much more convenient-said Lakshmamma," a devotee.

"On festival days and Fridays, buses often get delayed because vehicles are parked on both sides of the road near the temple. If more cars are accommodated inside the complex, traffic flow will improve significantly for everyone," said Ramesh Kumar, a BMTC bus conductor.

"I used to spend more time circling the temple looking for parking than standing in the darshan queue. Senior citizens are often forced to walk long distances because cars are parked far away on Kanakapura Road. A parking facility inside the complex will save us both time and peace of mind," said Srimanth Kumar MN, an auto driver.

Temple authorities have already submitted a proposal to the Public Works Department (PWD) seeking a detailed estimate for the cost of the multi-storey structure.

N Krishnappa, the executive officer of Sri Banashankari Temple, told BM, "We have requested the PWD to prepare a comprehensive cost assessment. Once the estimate is prepared and approved, work on the project will begin immediately."

Eight-month parking mess leaves citizens fuming

Senior citizens and children face daily commuting difficulties as haphazardly parked vehicles occupy footpaths and narrow key residential roads

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Residents of Lal Bahadur Shastri (LBS) Nagar have been facing problems due to haphazard parking of vehicles on 7th and 8th Main Roads. They have been running from pillar to post for more than eight months seeking a solution, but in vain. Residents said haphazard parking of vehicles, especially two-wheelers, has become a major hindrance for senior citizens and children using footpaths and roads.

"There is no space on the footpath for pedestrians to walk. With parking of vehicles on both sides of the road, commuting on 7th and 8th Main Roads has become a tough task. We have submitted a memorandum to the HAL Police Inspector, but no measures were taken to ensure parking of vehicles as per the norms," said Devendra Kumar, a resident.

Demanding that traffic police ensure discipline among motorists, especially gig workers, Rajeshwari Manivannan, a homemaker, said she has been residing in the locality for more than two decades and there were no hurdles on 7th and 8th Main Roads all these years. "Once, our area was known as a secluded locality and convenient for senior citizens to reside. Now, it has become tough for us to reside here because of noise pollution and haphazard parking on these roads," said Manivannan. Expressing disappointment, Anish Swaminathan, a resident, complained that authorities, especially traffic police, have failed to fix the problem despite receiving complaints from residents.

"With schools reopening, these roads will be congested with too many vehicles. There is a commerce company on 8th Main Road. Many two-wheelers are parked haphazardly on the road, thus causing hurdles for vehicular movement. I want the traffic police and the Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) authorities to take suitable measures to fix these problems as early as possible," he said. A resident, on condition of anonymity, said traffic police and BECC authorities have failed to clear encroachments on footpaths in the area. "No traffic police constable is seen regulating traffic on these roads. The traffic police are busy regulating traffic and ensuring zero traffic on main roads for VIPs. They have no time to ensure vehicles are parked without violating norms," said the resident. However, the HAL Traffic Police Inspector said he would investigate the matter.

Vehicles parked haphazardly on 8th Main of LBS Nagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

Date:13-06-2026

Our client has negotiated for the purchase of the Schedule property from its owners Mr.M.D.Raghavendra Son of late. Dattathreya, Vasudeva Shetty.A.L son of N LakshminarayanaShetty and Mr. Hanumanthaiah.C Son of Chikkamuniyappa for valuable sale consideration. Any Person/s, firm/s, institution/s, Banks, etc., claiming to have any right, title and interest over the Schedule property or having any claims/objections of whatsoever nature, to the proposed sale of Schedule property in favour of our client, are required to lodge/intimate their claims/objections with documentary evidence in support thereof to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which our client shall proceed with the purchase of Schedule property without any reference to any such claim and the same if any shall be considered as waived and/or abandoned.

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Sd/- S.HanumantheGowda, Advocate.
Advocate /SVH LAW ASSOCIATES
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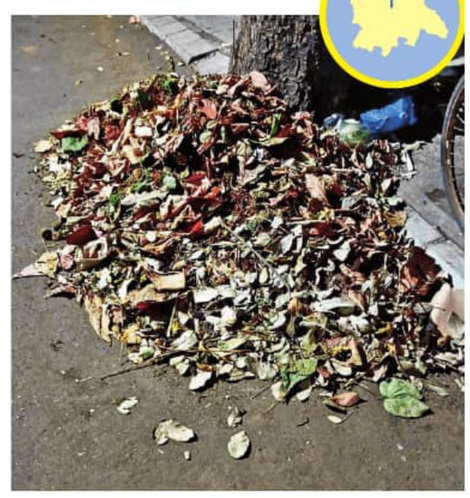

Garbage black spots continue to reappear on A Main Road in Rajajinagar 2nd Stage despite repeated clean-up drives, prompting residents to demand stricter monitoring by civic authorities and more frequent visits by Green Marshals.

Roadside danger
Kempegowda Road

Large broken tree branches hanging precariously along the busy Kempegowda Road stretch between Pothys and the Devanga Sangha building are posing a significant risk to motorists and pedestrians.

Tree trouble
New BEL Road

Overgrown tree branches are obstructing a traffic signal and reducing visibility for commuters, creating a safety hazard near the busy hospital zone on New BEL Road.

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SUNDAY READ

Time for Kannada rhyme

Need to ensure children spend first few years of their learning experience with mother tongue, say educationists

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Naayimari Naayimari yelli hode? Mane kavalu kayalu naanu hode.

Anyone familiar with this nursery rhyme?

How about these? London Bridge is Falling Down, My Fair Lady and Baa Baa Black Sheep

Chances are more people are familiar with the second set of rhymes that the first one.

Though experts say traditional nursery rhymes in Kannada are a great way to bond young minds to the rich tradition and culture of Karnataka, our systems are too taken in with English rhymes.

Kannada language experts say there is enhanced learning among children who learnt Kannada as their mother tongue, with reference to the pronunciation, because Kannada language is a technically formed language. Radha, Kannada professor from St Joseph's institution explains that Kannada can be written exactly the same as it is spoke. "There are 52 different Varnamaale with exact Swarodhethisthana," she said.

According to educationists children should be introduced to the vocabulary used at home and its surroundings, meaning the mother tongue, in the first years of learning. Slowly, the child develops vocabulary which is not natural to them, thereby putting a burden on the child with hidden ideas and agenda of the colonial raj, which continues today, she said.

She said that the impression of the British Raj has not left the city schools, where young minds have been imposed with the idea that if you speak English, you are modern. "There are a host of Kannada rhymes by great renowned writers, which are treasures available even on social media, and there should be no excuse to impose a foreign language on a young formative mind," an expert said.

Parents in urban Bengaluru have the notion of 'English Medium' education, which does not stand anywhere when it comes to the rich language and literature of Kannada. "Learning Kannada from the earliest age can bring a close-knit bonding and thinking ability of children with parents and grandparents. It makes the child feel physically, culturally and ideologically safe and nourished with the warmth of the beautiful Kannada language," said Radha.

"Learning Kannada from the earliest age can bring a close-knit bonding and thinking ability of children with parents and grandparents. It makes the child feel physically, culturally and ideologically safe and nourished

— Radha, Kannada professor

English rhymes were introduced to focus on colonialism, imperialism, which a budding mind has no clue about. "For example, why should a Kannada child help in "Build it up, with iron bars, my fair lady". Who is this fair lady? Indians do not belong to the 'fair' category in terms of skin colour. So, when the child is taught the rhyme, which parents so proudly make their children recite in front of relatives and friends, is it explained, who this fair lady is and what does fair mean? Does it mean colour or justice?"

Why is Baa Baa Black Sheep only black? Has the child been told what black means or why only black sheep and not white sheep? According to Radha, "If the government initiates Kannada rhymes all across the state, and particularly Bengaluru city where there is a cosmopolitan population, the issue of the current Kannada Kaali will not arise. Kannada children will be proud of their heritage, culture, language, writers, history, environment and then pass it down to the non-Kannada-speaking children in their class," she said.

A unique rhyme

Eruve Eruve Pariya Eruve naanu jotege baruve…

In this rhyme, the child is taught the hard work of an ant and to follow the ant's principle, because both the ant and the child are little, and if a feeling of discipline, coordination and hard work is instilled in this child with the example of the ant. The child is also taught to do their own work without wasting time like the ant.

Unlike, Rain Rain Go Away because a boy Johnny wants to play. All children want to play, in the rain or in the sun, but none of the children in the Kannada language are called Johnny. According to Srilatha, a mother of a kindergarten child, "I have to talk to my child in English as it is a status symbol because the schools and the parents insist on speaking English all the time. In fact, at times, my child feels embarrassed if I happen to talk to her in Kannada in public. This is sad but it is the truth."

In years gone by, programmes like Nali Kali (Kannada for joyful learning) had an innovative child-centric educational methodology used in Karnataka Government schools for young children in the primary classes. Developed in 1995, with the help of UNICEF, the programme was designed to tackle foundational skills in the Kannada language.

This programme in 2026 is undergoing a major policy shift, reviewed by the Karnataka Development Authority (KDA) and the Education Department.Nali Kali is being phased out and new approaches are being experimented with as students found it difficult to adapt to traditional teachings and language because of the huge influx of various people, who are now residents of Bengaluru city.

Shishugeetegalu are categorised into two groups, in forms of folk songs and modern educational poems. Kannada poets and lyricists like GP Rajaratnam, NS Lakshmi Narayana Bhatta, and YS Krishnamurthy have been credited and worked towards instilling the tradition of Kannada through their songs and poems in young minds.

ED flags ₹95-crore Maoist link

Kothanur Police officials have registered an FIR against seven individuals, including representatives allegedly linked to the US-based Christian missionary organisation Timothy Initiative, over alleged large-scale financial irregularities involving the use of foreign-issued debit cards and suspected violations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), with alleged links to Maoist activities.

According to police officials, the FIR was registered based on a complaint filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The case has been booked under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and an investigation is currently underway.

The accused have been identified as Jonathan S Rajan of Bengaluru, Supreme Joy of Mysuru, Mica Mark, Ajith Varghese Mathai, Varghese Chacko of Chhattisgarh, and Babu Kurmi of Assam, among others.

According to police, the case stems from investigations conducted by the ED during raids carried out in April this year. During the searches, officials allegedly found that funds were being withdrawn within India using foreign-issued debit cards. Investigators suspect that more than 24 foreign debit cards were recovered during the investigation, with transactions reportedly exceeding ₹44 crore and internal documents suggesting exposure of up to ₹95 crore between 2024 and 2026. The funds were allegedly withdrawn through ATMs in Left-Wing Extremism-affected regions, raising national security concerns.

Investigators have found that funds were allegedly withdrawn in India using debit cards issued by the US-based Truist Bank in the name of one Santhosh Kumar. During the searches, the Enforcement Directorate reportedly recovered 24 foreign debit cards from the possession of accused Mica Mark.

Preliminary findings also suggest that several transactions were carried out in Maoist-affected areas of Chhattisgarh. During the interrogation of another accused, Ajith Varghese Mathai, officials are said to have obtained inputs regarding the possible involvement of shell companies operating out of Bengaluru.

Considering the seriousness of the allegations, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) has been constituted to probe the case. The team is expected to submit its report to central agencies, including the Enforcement Directorate. Police have launched a detailed investigation into the alleged financial network and its operations across the country. Verification of documents and digital evidence is currently underway.

–BMB

Axe work: Damned if you do, dammed if you don't

Proposal to remove 197 of the 203 trees standing near Hesaraghatta reservoir to ensure bund safety causes concern

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has submitted an application to the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) seeking permission to remove trees from the Hesaraghatta tank bund.

While 203 trees currently stand in the area, the proposal involves the removal of 197 trees to ensure the reservoir's safety.

According to BWSSB, the project was initiated following a recent inspection of the lake, during which experts observed large trees growing on its embankment. They advised the BWSSB to take the necessary measures to ensure that no trees are located within 40 metres of the bank. Accordingly, permission has been sought from the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bangalore City Division.

A few years ago, a parliamentary committee also raised concerns about the ageing dam and warned that failure to implement safety measures could pose risks to downstream areas.

Notably, the reservoir is managed by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

City-based environmental activists say that Hesaraghatta Lake has undergone significant changes over the past three decades. The grassland area has also witnessed extensive tree-planting activities, which have adversely affected its unique habitat and biodiversity.

"The grassland and the lake were being impacted by unrestricted human and vehicular activity. Hesaraghatta Grassland was declared a conservation reserve to reduce this impact and protect biodiversity in the area. While the removal of trees may

197 trees marked for removal from Hesaraghatta tank bund

be important for the integrity of the bund, care should be taken to ensure that only the minimum necessary number of trees is removed," said Vijay Nishant, founder of Project Vruksha and former member of Bengaluru's Biodiversity Management Committee.

Notably, the decision to declare the 5,000-acre Hesaraghatta Grassland a conservation reserve was taken by the Karnataka State Board for Wildlife (SBWL) in 2024 to protect it from pressures arising from human activities such as unregulated vehicular movement, sand mining, hunting and tree plantations. The move followed concerns raised by conservationists that the grassland was facing increasing pressure from such activities.

According to a biodiversity report, the 5,000-acre green patch is home to 39 native plant species, 12 tree species, 10 mammal species, seven reptile species, 264 bird species, 13 amphibian species, three spider species, 101 butterfly species and 395 insect species. "The purpose of declaring the grassland a conservation reserve is to minimise human interference and conserve the rich biodiversity it supports. BWSSB and the KFD should ensure minimal intervention and damage during this process," said a city-based environmentalist.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

OOTY'S PINK WONDER

Our reader shares a striking image of the Banana Passion Flower in full bloom, showcasing its vibrant pink petals against the cool and refreshing landscape of Ooty. A vigorous climbing vine, it is cherished not only for its ornamental beauty but also for its delicious edible fruit, making it a unique blend of elegance and utility in nature.

The picture was clicked by reader **NJ Ravi Chander**

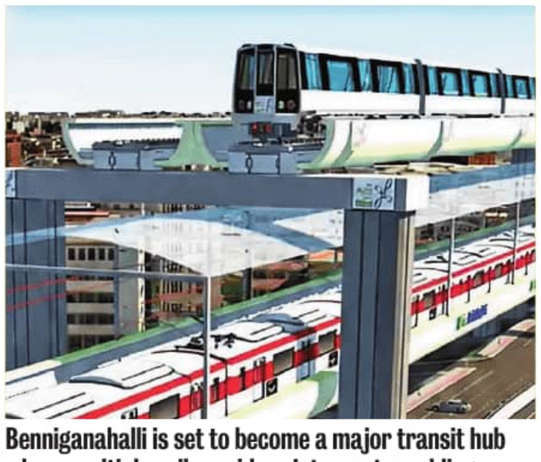
If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Double-decker corridor to reshape Benniganahalli into transit hub

Metro and Suburban Rail converge on stacked viaduct, saving land, costs and easing commuter access through integrated design

City is set to get a unique multi-level transport corridor at Benniganahalli, where Metro and Suburban Rail trains will run one above the other on a double-decker structure, creating one of the city's most significant multimodal transit hubs. The half-kilometre-long stretch will integrate Namma Metro's under-construction Blue Line and the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project's Corridor-4 (Kanaka Line) between Rajanukunte and Heelalige. While a road will continue at ground level, suburban trains operated by K-RIDE will run on the first elevated deck, with Metro trains operating on a second viaduct above it.

Officials said planners designed the structure within a common right of way, allowing two major mass transit systems to share the same corridor without requiring additional land. The suburban rail viaduct sits directly below the Metro Blue Line structure near the Benniganahalli flyover, creating a three-tier transport arrangement comprising road, suburban rail and Metro infrastructure.



Benniganahalli is set to become a major transit hub where multiple rail corridors intersect, enabling seamless passenger transfers

The project is expected to transform Benniganahalli into one of Bengaluru's largest railway interchanges. The area already hosts the operational Purple Line connecting Challaghatta and Whitefield. The upcoming Blue Line, linking Central Silk Board with Kempegowda International Airport via KR Puram, will also pass through the corridor. In addition, three of the four Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project corridors will intersect at Benniganahalli. Among them, the 25-km Corridor-2 (Mallige Line) connecting Chikkabanavara and Benniganahalli remains under construction. Civil works between Chikkabanavara and Yeshwanthpur are nearing completion, while authorities aim to complete the remaining section by 2029. The 35.5-km Corridor-3 (Parijata Line) between Kengeri and Whitefield and the 47-km Corridor-4 (Kanaka Line) between Rajanukunte and Heelalige will also pass through the junction.

A rare three-tier corridor brings road, suburban rail and Metro together at Benniganahalli, promising seamless connectivity, reduced land acquisition, and a transformative interchange for future urban mobility

Perhaps the biggest advantage of the double-decker design is that it avoids large-scale land acquisition in a densely populated neighbourhood. According to a K-RIDE official, the original plan would have required the acquisition of nearly 1 acre and 26 guntas of land and the relocation of around 600 families. "By opting for a double-decker configuration, we avoided both land acquisition and displacement of residents. The decision resulted in savings of approximately ₹169 crore," he said.

Urban mobility experts believe the integrated design could serve as a model for future infrastructure projects in land-starved cities, helping authorities expand transport networks while minimising disruption to residents and reducing project costs. **— BMB**

DID YOU KNOW?

Genes linked to antibiotic resistance are present across multiple ocean basins, including remote waters, according to findings released on Monday from an Italian-led research project that analysed seawater samples worldwide. The SeA Care project detected antibiotic-resistance genes in the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Arctic and other regions, with higher concentrations near busy shipping routes and densely populated coastal areas. Researchers said the findings show oceans act as a global reservoir for land-based pollution, carrying genetic traces of antibiotic use and urban discharge far beyond their sources and potentially facilitating their spread to remote communities.
The study also found microplastics, PFAS "forever chemicals" and traces of SARS-CoV-2 genetic material in open-ocean and remote waters.
In its first three years, the project collected more than 4,000 seawater samples from over 140 sites across the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Pacific, Arctic and Indian oceans, helping scientists track emerging environmental and public health threats.
"Protecting human health today inevitably means taking care of the seas and oceans," ISS Director General Andrea Piccioli said. **— Reuters**

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NEET leak rumour debunked as govt rejects viral question paper

The Claim: A purported NEET question paper circulating widely on social media allegedly proves that the examination paper has been leaked again, raising concerns among aspirants, parents, and the public about examination integrity.
Fact: PIB Fact Check has confirmed the viral NEET question paper is fake and no leak has been reported. Candidates should rely only on official NEET and NTA sources.

As thousands of medical aspirants continue to track developments related to the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), a fresh wave of misinformation has surfaced on social media. A purported NEET question paper is being widely circulated online with claims that the examination paper has been leaked once again. The claim, however, has been categorically rejected by the government.

PIB fact check labels viral claim as fake

The Press Information Bureau's Fact Check unit has issued a clear clarification, stating that the question paper being shared across social media platforms is not authentic. According to the official fact-check, the claim that the NEET paper has been leaked again is false. The warning comes amid heightened public sensitivity around examination integrity, particularly after previous controversies involving competitive examinations. Authorities have moved swiftly to counter the spread of misinformation before it creates confusion among candidates and their families.

Candidates urged not to trust unverified content

In its advisory, PIB Fact Check has urged students and parents to exercise caution and avoid believing, sharing, or relying on any examination-related material that has not been verified through official channels. Officials stressed that unverified documents, screenshots, and messages circulated through social media groups can mislead candidates and create unnecessary panic. Aspirants have been advised to cross-check every examination-related update with official sources before acting on it.

Official NEET website remains the only reliable source

The government has reiterated that all authentic announcements, notifications, and updates related to NEET are published only through official channels. Candidates have been advised to follow the National Testing Agency's NEET portal for verified information and avoid depending on unofficial social media posts or forwarded messages. The clarification is part of a broader effort to curb the spread of fake content that often emerges around major national examinations.

Government seeks public help against misinformation

The PIB Fact Check unit has also called on citizens to report suspicious or misleading content linked to the Government of India. Authorities believe timely reporting can help prevent the rapid spread of false information and protect students from being misled.

With competitive examinations carrying significant consequences for millions of aspirants, officials have underlined the importance of relying solely on verified information and ignoring rumours designed to create confusion. The latest fact-check serves as a reminder that viral claims do not automatically equate to facts, and candidates should remain vigilant against misinformation during the examination season. **— TOI Online**

Fall in elephant deaths after conservation efforts

Forest interventions, power line fixes and court-led surveys reduce elephants fatalities across state significantly this year

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Recent elephant mortality data from the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) indicate a significant decline in elephant deaths, including those caused by unnatural factors, during the first five months of 2026 compared to previous years.

Between January and May this year, only 11 elephant deaths were reported across the state, with just one death attributed to electrocution.

In comparison, 31 elephant deaths were recorded during the same period in 2021. These included two deaths caused by gunshots, one due to snaring, one by electrocution and one in a train accident. The number stood at 25 deaths in 2022, including two gunshot deaths, one electrocution and one road accident.

The situation worsened in the following years. In 2023, the department recorded 37 elephant deaths between January and May, including six electrocutions and one gunshot death. This was followed by 49 deaths in 2024, of which four resulted from electrocution. In 2025, 35 elephant deaths were reported during the corresponding period, including five electrocution cases.

The reduction in elephant mortality comes against the backdrop of a significant intervention by the Karnataka High Court. In 2024, the court directed the State Government and the Forest Department to constitute area-wise committees to identify and map sagging power lines and illegal electric fences that pose a threat to elephants.

According to wildlife researcher Ramesh Belagere of the Foundation of Ecology and Education Development, recent interventions by the Forest Department may have contributed to the decline.

Wild elephants appear to be benefiting from sustained protection efforts, with fewer fatal encounters reported. Coordinated action against hazardous infrastructure and illegal fencing is showing encouraging results

Recent conservation efforts appear to be making a difference as elephant deaths fall significantly compared to previous years

"The department has been capturing elephants that frequently venture out of forest areas and enter human settlements. Such elephants are more likely to encounter dangerous situations that can result in electrocution and other unnatural deaths. In addition, efforts to identify and remove sagging power lines and illegal electric fences may also have helped reduce mortality. However, many factors lead to natural deaths among wild populations," he said.

The High Court issued the direction while disposing of a suo motu petition initiated in June 2024 based on a Bangalore Mirror report highlighting recurring elephant electrocution incidents. During the proceedings, the court sought detailed information from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), the Karnataka Government and senior forest officials.

"After the High Court's order, mapping of sagging power lines and illegal electric fences was undertaken across the state. While electrocution is not a major concern in every forest division, corrective measures have been implemented wherever such risks were identified. Several meetings were held with Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) and ESCOMs, followed by joint operations to address the issue. These efforts may have played a role in reducing elephant deaths," said a senior KFD official.

Survey finds 231 hazardous power line locations in Bannerghatta Park.

Farmers unite against Bidadi township project

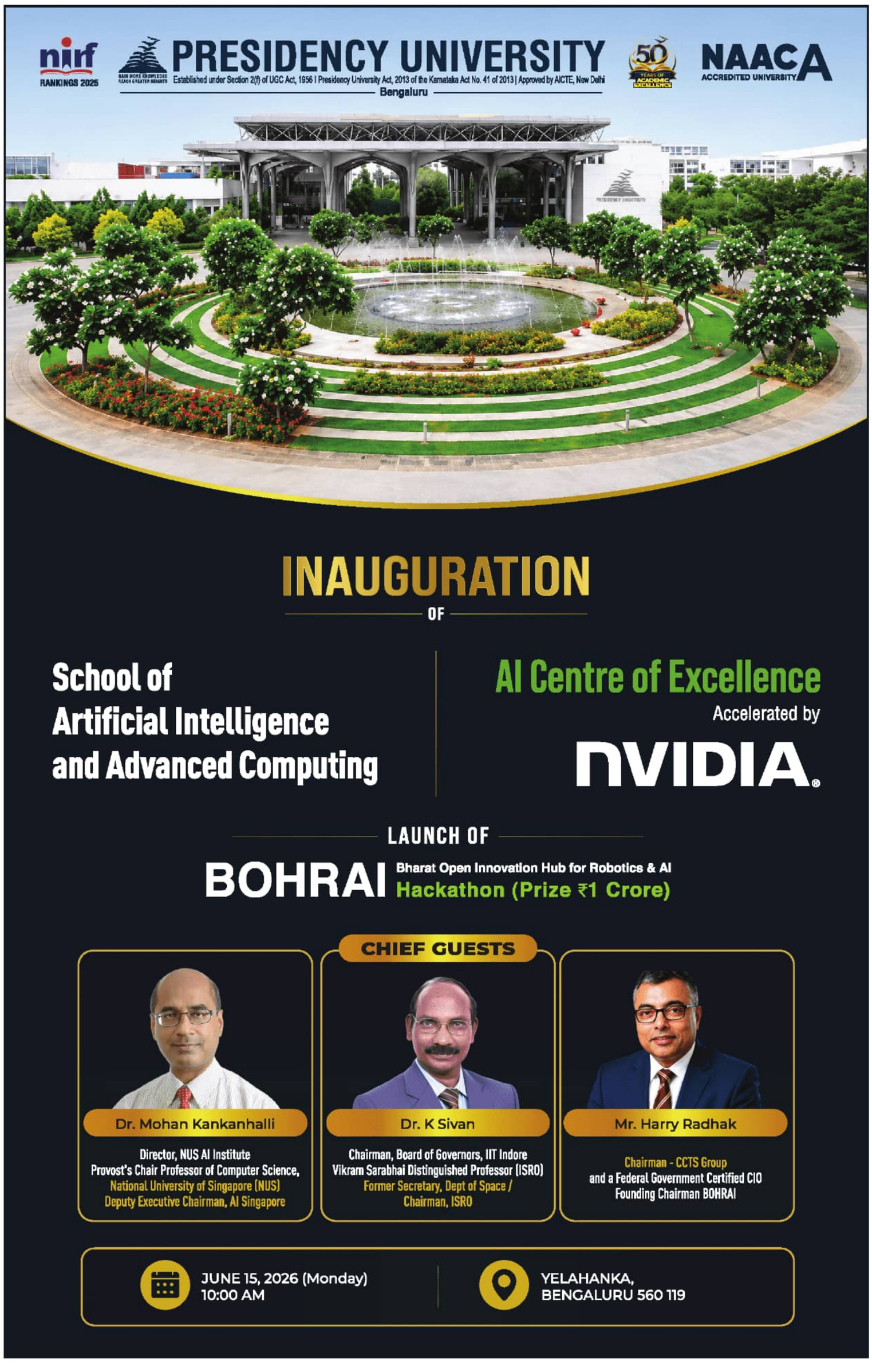
Strongly opposing the Karnataka government's issuance of a final notification to acquire nearly 500 acres for the proposed GBIT near Bidadi in Bengaluru South district, farmers and villagers have called for a large-scale protest on June 22.

Local villagers, farmers and farmers' organisations, including Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, will hold the protest to oppose land acquisition for the Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) project. At a meeting held on Saturday, farmer leaders and organisations resolved to back villagers resisting the project and intensify opposition to the government's move. The final notification covers acquisition of 499 acres in three villages across Ramanagara and Harohalli taluks for the GBIT project. Organisers expect participation from several neighbouring villages and farmer groups. –BMB

CM reviews governance, monsoon readiness statewide

Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Saturday chaired a review meeting at the Vidhana Soudha with Deputy Commissioners, Chief Executive Officers and Superintendents of Police from districts across the state to assess key administrative and governance-related issues.

The meeting focused on maintaining law and order, strengthening preparedness ahead of the monsoon season and accelerating the implementation of administrative initiatives across districts. During the review, the Chief Minister examined various issues concerning governance and public administration and issued necessary directions to officials to ensure effective coordination, smooth functioning of government machinery and timely delivery of public services. –BMB



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Preliminary group analysis

Group I

France (3), Senegal (15) , Iraq (56), Norway (31)

France and Senegal are surely in a comparatively easy group and should finish on top in that order. The 1998 and 2018 champions France are No 3 in the 211-nation FIFA ranking list with Senegal not very far away at No 15. France is brimming with talent in all departments.

With Brice Samba and Mike Maignan in goal they have little worries. The defence looks solid with the likes of Dayot Upamecano and William Saliba or Ibrahima Konate possibly pairing up in the centre. They also have Lucas Digne, Theo Hernandez, Lucas Hernandez to depend on on the flanks. But their attack is perhaps the best in the tournament. Kylian Mbappe, Ousmane Dembele, Michael Olise, Desire Doue, Rayan Cherki, Marcus Thuram, Jean-Philippe Mateta have been in brilliant form. Stopping any or a combination of them all would be a herculean task. Senegal won the African Cup which has been mired in controversy though Egypt refused to accept the trophy and said Senegal were worthy winners. Sadio Mane has been in sublime form with Ibrahim Mbaye and Iliman Ndiaye for company in the attack. Yet, the goal, defence and midfield are none too convincing. Yet, they must hold off Erling Haaland's Norway to finish second. Antonio Nusa and Alexander Sorloth can do well with Haaland as Martin Odegaard would hold the midfield together. But the goal looks a little brittle. Yet, Norway can surely make the Round of 32 by taking the second slot or being among the best third placed finishers.

Group J

Argentina (1), Algeria (28), Austria (23), Jordan (63)

Argentina's Lionel Messi practices with teammates

All eyes will be on the defending champions led by their iconic captain Lionel Messi, now in his sixth World Cup. But coming for a World Cup with a stint with Inter Miami and doing so from Barcelona and La Liga are entirely different 'worlds'. Messi does have his goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez who saved a certain goal in the final against France to deny Kolo Muani in the dying minutes of extra time.

But Lisandro Martínez, Nicolas Otamendi or Cristian Romero in defence looked a wee bit brittle unless the youngsters step up. Alexis MacAllister and Emiliano Buendía in midfield are intelligent and hardworking. But can Franco Mastantuono, Alejandro Garnacho, Lautaro Martínez and Julian Alvarez provide the sharpness which Messi might be lacking at this point in his career is the question. But the three-times champions have only Algeria, Austria and Jordan to contend with and should top the group. Austria have been doing well with David Alaba, Kevin Danso, Christoph Baumgartner, Konrad Laimer and Marcel Sabitzer to depend on and should figure in the Round of 32.

Group K

Portugal (5), DR Congo (45), Uzbekistan (50), Colombia (13)

Cristiano Ronaldo is in his sixth World Cup. Except the pinnacle of soccer glory, all other trophies adorn his cabinet. At 41 and

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo during training

playing in the Saudi League, Cristiano could be an inspiring presence. Fortunately for him and his hopes and dreams, Portugal have a very exciting squad at their disposal. All their departments are manned by exceptional players. Their midfield looks exceptionally classy with Vitinha, Bruno Fernandes and Bernardo Silva roaming around the park majestically. Cristiano Ronaldo has a cracker of a frontline with Joao Felix, Francisco Trincao, Francisco Conceicao, Pedro Neto, Rafael Leao, Goncalo Guedes and Goncalo Ramos all capable of delivering the goods. Portugal could go all the way to the USA. Colombia, led by their indefatigable James Rodríguez with the exciting Luis Diaz to lead the attack, should finish behind Portugal with debutants Uzbekistan and the 133rd ranked Congo unlikely to cause much problems.

Group L

Group L - England (4), Croatia (11), Ghana (73), Panama (34)

It's coming home, has been the perennial song of England's fans at every major football tournament. But except at home in 1966, the World Cup has never gone 'home'. A squad led by Harry Kane with Jude Bellingham, Declan Rice, Bukayo Saka, Marcus Rashford and Anthony Gordon in superb form, England will again raise hopes of their supporters. Despite the presence of their No 1 custodian Jordan Pickford, defenders Marc Guess, John Stones, the backlines lack the quality to see England beyond the Round of 32. Of course they could top the group with Croatia running them close. Luka Modric led the Croatians to the final in 2018. But now Modric, who is now with AC Milan after his glorious stint with Real Madrid, has some proven players like Mateo Kovacic, Mario Pasalic, Luka Sucic and forwards like Ivan Perisic, Andrej Kramaric and Ante Budimir upfront. But most of them are in the twilight of their careers and could find the competition too hot along with the weather. England and Croatia should finish as the top two. Ghana has some exciting players like Antoine Semenyo, Inaki Williams, Jordan Ayew and the experienced Thomas Partey and could grab a best third placed slot while Panama should gain by the experience of competing in a World Cup.

Goal glut

1. Giovanni Reyna of the US celebrates scoring their fourth goal with Chris Richards. US won 4-1 against Paraguay;

2. Luc De Fougerolles (L) of Canada vies with Samed Bazdar (C) of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Canada got historic first point with draw against Bosnia

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"SCAN TO APPLY"

Multi-cultural nature of B'luru's habbas make them unique

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Heritage Hub (RHH) said that in order to decipher the origins of oora habbas, one must look at Karnataka's history. He notes that the story goes back to the Gangas, who ruled a large portion of southern Karnataka between 3000-9000 CE. Manyapura or manne, which is situated in present day Bengaluru rural district's Nelamangala taluk, was once the capital of Ganga dynasty. Manyapura houses a temple dedicated to Manneamma. It is said to be the only temple where one can witness the goddess to be seated on an elephant. It is to be noted that the royal emblem of the Ganga dynasty also features an elephant.

"Manneamma was a war deity that was worshipped for the purpose of prosperity in all aspects – fertility and strength among others. This practice was continued by the Cholas after their takeover as well. Over time, seven idols were also installed on the bank of an ancient tank for worship, representing the sapthamathrikas (the seven divine mothers) – Brahmi, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Indrani and Chamundi. But this practice discontinued as empires changed hands," explained Dr Nrupathunga. When the Vijayanagara empire began its reign, its former Chieftain Kempegowda is said to have had a spiritual dream, where manneamma appeared, urging him to begin the practice once again. "Kempegowda then established Annamma here in Bengaluru. She is referred to as the Nagara Devathe (Goddess of Bengaluru), the one who protects the city from all evils. Over 25 villages, the largest number in comparison to the others, consider Annamma to be their deity," he said.

He said that these festivities were celebrated as a way to communicate prayers for better rain, health, fertility and harvest. "Playing loud instruments was believed to ward off ancestral negative energies and the event (habba) itself created a sense of positivity. It also created an occasion for daughters who have been married away to visit their natal homes. Estranged relatives could use it as a chance to reconcile on trivial issues. The few days of festivities created an atmosphere that helped strengthen interpersonal bonds and one's spirituality," he said, highlighting that these jathres or habbas were also used to create environments for healthy socialisation and exchange. He hinted that frequent use of neem and turmeric during these times could have also aided in avoiding the spread of epidemic diseases.

He said that purity rituals such as not cooking spicy food or meat for a month prior were followed. During the festival, various aarti offerings including those made in flowers, especially hombale (a flower cluster that breaks open on an areca nut palm) and jaggery, are offered to the goddesses. Animal sacrifices are also made. He further noted that most of the rituals and traditions took place during the night as the communities involved were mainly agrarian and needed these events to fit into their regular routines without causing disruptions to business.

Dr Nrupathunga added that while similar practices may be prevalent in other cities in India, what makes it special in Bengaluru is the multi-cultural aspect. There are four deities (gadi devathes or border goddesses) on the four corners of Bengaluru which are also called the quadrilateral goddesses, he noted. "Muthyalamma, one among them, is said to have come into existence after a small girl from the Kumbara community was possessed, and demanded that an idol be made in mud every year and worshipped. Over 20 villages that come under present day Halasuru, Frazer town and even reaching the borders of Shanthinagar, worship her," he explained, adding that similar practices then began to sprout across the city.

"For core Bengalureans, it is a part of their identity, a part of their heart and soul. Instead of scientifically defining everything, we must understand that an individual's faith cannot be questioned. We are following the traditions laid down by our forefathers

Collection of villages

Roshini M, a conservation architect based in Bengaluru, said that since the city was essentially a collection of more than 500 odd villages, the settlements were built around temples that housed these deities. "Every particular village has its own traditions and cultural rituals such as processions. They are mostly celebrated within March and May annually or in regular intervals. Though the physical boundaries of each of these villages have been lost to form larger neighbourhoods as the city has evolved into a major metropolis, we can still see landmarks and demarcations of the past localities through the procession routes taken during these habbas," she explained, noting that these festivals are largely passed on orally and through folklore rather than written documentation.

A 60-year-old former resident of Cottonpete told Bangalore Mirror that while these festivals many decades ago were rooted in deep spirituality, they are now evolving to subtle competitions. "It's about who has the best lightning or artforms called down for performance now. People are forgetting that habbas are meant to honour the divine," she said.

"Bengaluru's intangible heritage is very mixed. You cannot associate a particular festival (as done with Ganesh Chaturthi and Mumbai) with Bengaluru due to its cosmopolitan mix. However, oora habbas are local, making them unique. They represent how important it is for a city, despite having turned high-class and innovative technologies coming from it, is still rooted in its essence and culture," Roshini said. "It (oora habbas) has been a part of our history and culture for many centuries. For core Bengalureans, it is a part of their identity, a part of their heart and soul. Instead of scientifically devising everything, we must understand that an individual's faith cannot be questioned. We are following the traditions laid down by our forefathers such as Kempegowda," Dr Nrupathunga attested.

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Violence against women by alcoholic husbands on steady rise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

economy. Karnataka is among India's largest and fastest-growing alcohol markets, with excise revenue contributing 11% to the state's total tax collection and 20.3% to its own tax revenue during 2024-25. While only 11% of the state's population consumes alcohol, lower than the national average of 14.6%, Karnataka's annual per capita alcohol consumption stands at 9.1 litres, significantly higher than the national average of 6.4 litres. Among men aged 15 to 49 years, nearly 16.5% consume alcohol, while about 0.9% of women are drinkers.

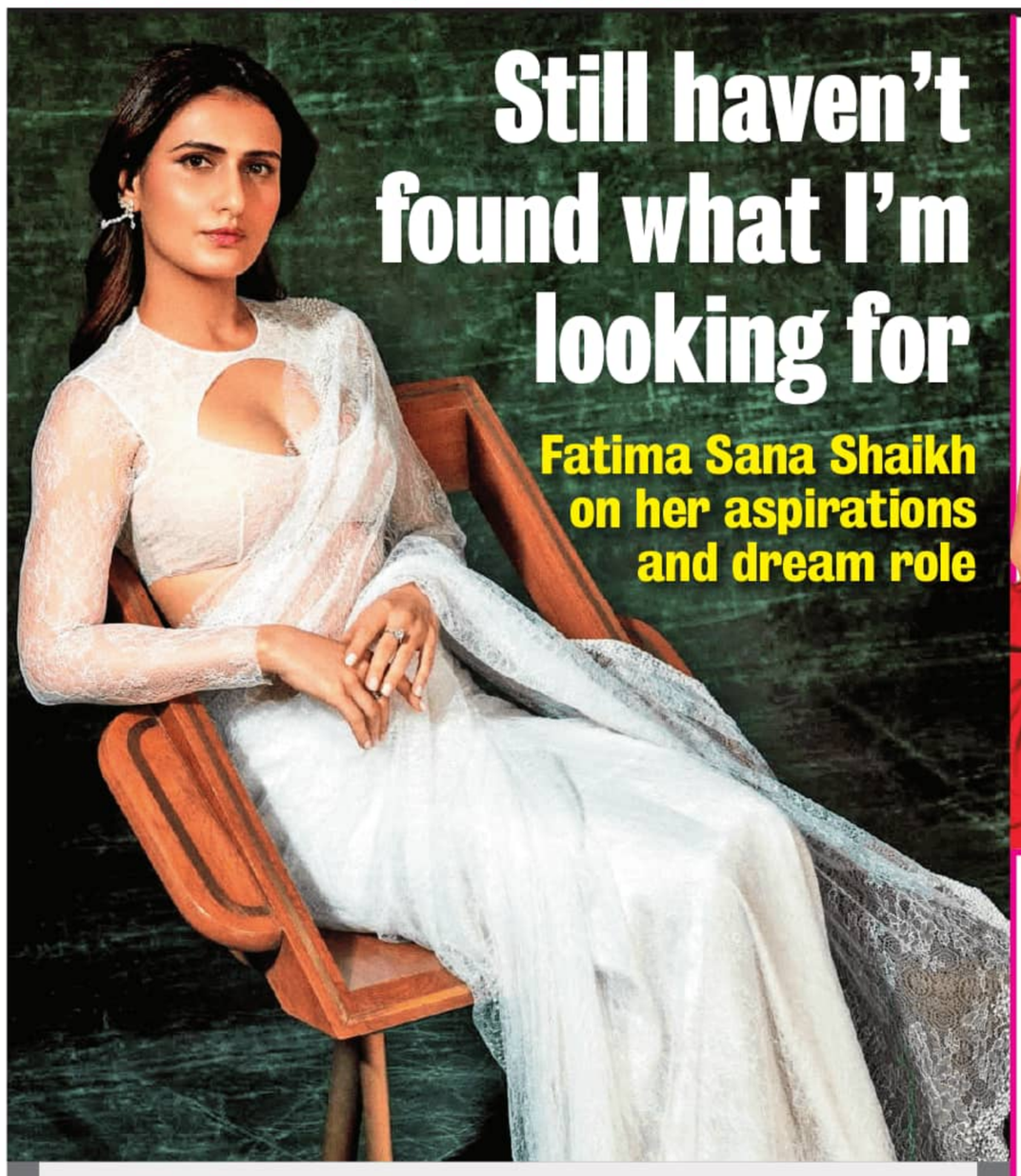
The report warns that the social cost of alcohol addiction in Karnataka has now become a serious public concern. Official figures show that cases of violence against women by alcohol-dependent husbands have steadily risen over the years.

The state recorded 8,143 such cases in 2022-23, 8,171 cases in 2023-24, 8,111 cases in 2024-25, and a sharp rise to 9,168 cases in 2025-26. According to the report, many complaints registered under the Union government's Nirbhaya One Stop Centres and Karnataka's Santhwana scheme dealing with domestic violence, marital conflict, and gender-based harassment were directly linked to alcohol consumption within families.

Medical studies cited in the report further confirmed the pattern of abuse. A study conducted by National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences examined 150 alcohol-dependent men and found that a majority had engaged in abusive behaviour towards their intimate partners. Researchers concluded that higher levels of alcohol dependence directly increased the likelihood of violent behaviour.

The Karnataka government's report estimates that the broader social and economic burden caused by alcohol addiction, including domestic violence, healthcare costs, productivity loss, and social instability, amounts to nearly 2% of the state's GDP, estimated at around ₹51,000 crore.

Women's rights activists described the findings as deeply alarming and called for urgent government intervention. "This report confirms what thousands of women silently suffer inside their homes every day. Alcohol addiction is not just a health issue, it is a major trigger for domestic violence, emotional trauma, and financial instability for women and children. The government cannot look at liquor only as a revenue source while families continue to break behind closed doors," said Vanitha Jayakumar, an activist.



Still haven't found what I'm looking for

Fatima Sana Shaikh on her aspirations and dream role

Fatima Sana Shaikh isn't shy about admitting she wants stardom. But for her, recognition means little without work that challenges her. Even after earning acclaim for performances across films and streaming projects, she says she is still searching for roles that push her beyond her comfort zone.

"For female actors, the range of roles available is still quite limited. We're craving layered, grey and negative characters. I still haven't found something that completely satisfies that need to explore and truly challenge myself as an actor," she says. That pursuit, she

believes, is essential to survive in the industry. "Because I think if that ends, then your growth is stunted. That's the beauty – or the drawback – of this industry. It's Friday to Friday. No matter where you are in your career, you have to start again," she says.

In an industry where validation is never in short supply, Fatima says she values people who keep her grounded. "I wish I had at least one person in my life who would just say I've done a great job," she laughs. "My manager tells me ten things that I've not done right, and that's good. These are the people who are my reality check. They are my mirrors. If I don't have them, then I don't know… it's not a good place to be in. It's a nice bubble to live in where people think you're amazing, but it's a bubble. It's not that they are working for me; I am working for them. It's a relationship," she adds.

For all her emphasis on craft, Fatima is candid about wanting a wider audience. She says, "Everybody wants stardom. It's basically people appreciating your work – a lot of people appreciating your work. They connect with you, either off screen or on screen, and you become someone they relate to or aspire to. I want to be that person. I hope I find my tribe and touch enough lives to receive that kind of love. But that can only happen with hard work, destiny and luck. You have to find the right film, the right thing."

–Vinay MR Mishra, TNN

Rock-solid support

Mouni Roy has responded to online rumours about her personal life weeks after she and Suraj Nambiar announced their separation.

The actor said she had heard people speculate about her sexual orientation and addressed the chatter. Mouni also spoke about the support she received from her women friends during a difficult phase and said emotional and financial independence remains important for women.

Mouni spoke about the rumours during a conversation with Monika Sharma on her YouTube channel. When asked about the biggest rumor she had heard about herself in Bollywood, Mouni replied, "Oh, that I am gay."

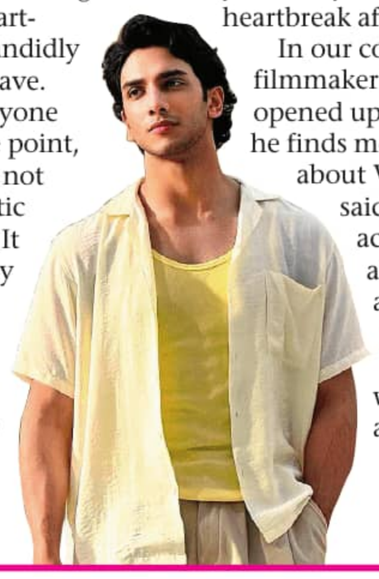
The actor then spoke about the people who helped her after her separation from Suraj. She said, "I feel very lucky that I have always had friends and family who have stood by me like a rock." Mouni credited her female friends for staying close to her through different phases of life. She said, "My girlfriends are the best." She also said women should focus on building emotional and financial strength. "You have to be emotionally and financially independent," she said. **–ETimes**

Heartbreaks are part of the game

Vedang Raina has made it to the big screen with his latest release 'Main Vaapas Aaunga,' alongside Diljit Dosanjh, Naseeruddin Shah, Sharvari and others. The movie is a romantic drama set amid the backdrop of partition leading to broken dreams and hearts. And speaking of broken hearts, in an exclusive conversation with us, Vedang Raina shared a page from his personal life. When asked about has he ever gone through heartbreak, he candidly shared, "I have. I think everyone has at some point, and it need not be a romantic heartbreak. It could be any kind."

He continued, "I've definitely gone through many heartbreaks." When asked how he coped with it, he replied, "Well, I guess time genuinely heals everything. I know this is really, you know, a cliché thing to say, but like with time you figure your things out."

Further explaining his point, Vedang mentioned, "You figure out how to adapt to certain changes in your life that are heartbreaking. I guess you learn to love yourself more. I think the more you love yourself, the less heartbreak affects you."



In our conversation, filmmaker Imtiaz Ali opened up about what he finds most unique about Vedang. He said, "As an actor, he wants all his answers. He prepares for the shot well in advance." **–ETimes**

Zoe's family plans

Actor Zoe Kravitz has shared fresh insights into her thoughts on marriage, motherhood and balancing family life with her career, saying she wants to be "realistic" about how she spends her energy in the future, according to People.

The 37-year-old actor spoke candidly about the possibility of starting a family and how it may affect her work as a filmmaker. "You just kind of have to be realistic. If I want to do something well, I have to focus on it. Knowing myself, I'm not going to have a kid and direct movies at exactly the same time," Kravitz said.

"You just have to decide where you want your energy to be," she added.

Kravitz's comments come months after People confirmed in April that she is engaged to singer and actor Harry Styles. The confirmation followed speculation after Kravitz was spotted wearing a large ring on her left hand. The couple was first linked in August 2025 after they were seen walking arm in arm in Rome. A source told People at the time that Styles was "spending time with Kravitz while she was on her 'Caught Stealing' press run."

Kravitz had shared in an interview in 2022 that she never felt pressured to become a mother by a certain age. **–ANI**

Heady mix of lust, devotion and superstition

MRUTHYUDEVATE (KANNADA)

2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆

- **DIRECTOR** Naveen Mahadev
- **ACTORS** Mahin Kuber, Sarika Rao, Madhu Surya, Dayana Jessika, Hima Mohan, Vinaya Prasad, and Naveen Mahadev.
- **Duration** 150 minutes
- **Certification** A

Kudos to Naveen Mahadev for directing, supporting and playing a funny role in this movie. The title indicates that it is a horror film and the tagline says a harsh punishment awaits those with lusty behaviour. The movie was shot in a forest and at a remote village.

The movie begins with a young girl falling off a cliff in a forest. She manages to get up but is frightened at the sight of another girl, who is lying unconscious there. At this juncture, the director introduces a scene which introduces Aarathi (Sarika Rao), a gig worker delivering food to customers. Aarathi's boyfriend Anush (Madhu Surya) asks her to join a get together event with his friend Kishu (Mahin Kuber). Kishu, who harbours an evil intention, asks his girl friend Deepa (Dayana Jessika) to convince Aarathi to join them to visit Anush's farm house near MM Hills. Aarathi agrees to accompany them. She meets Naatukoli Mahadeva (Naveen Mahadev), a lecherous person. He misbehaves with her. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Aarathi and Deepa.

As far as performances of the actors are concerned, they need to brush up their acting skills if they want to continue acting. Sarika Rao looks good but she just has a stoic expression in most of the scenes. Dayana Jessika has tried her best but fails to showcase her acting skills. Hima Mohan has nothing to do except appearing in a few scenes and in a dream song.

It is unfortunate that the director has failed to realise the importance of songs which are supposed to add value to the movie but in this movie, the songs look like they have been inserted unnecessarily as per the whims and fancies of the director. It is not clear what is the significance of the character of Naatukoli Madesha who is seen living in an isolated shelter in the forest.

The director should have reduced the runtime of the movie by 20 to 30 minutes to make it interesting.

–Y Maheswara Reddy

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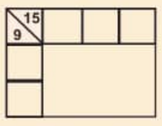
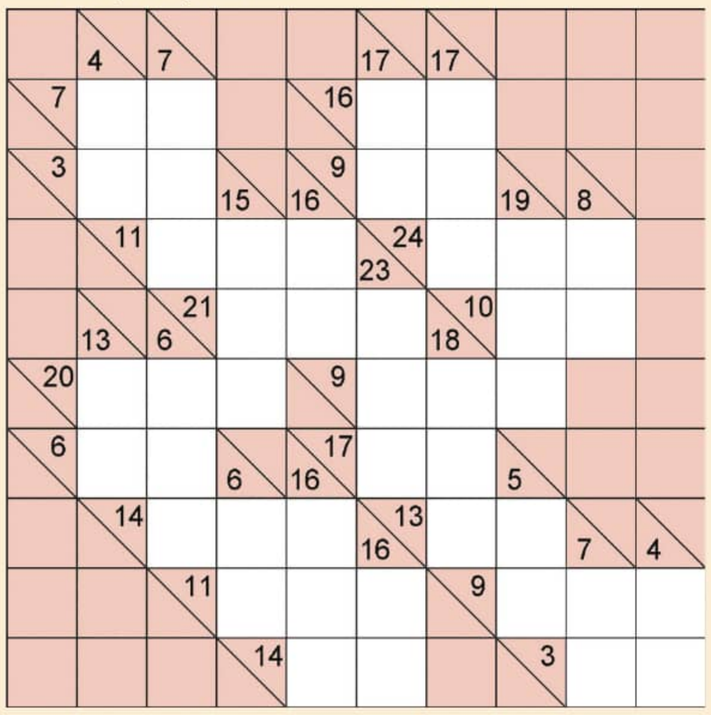
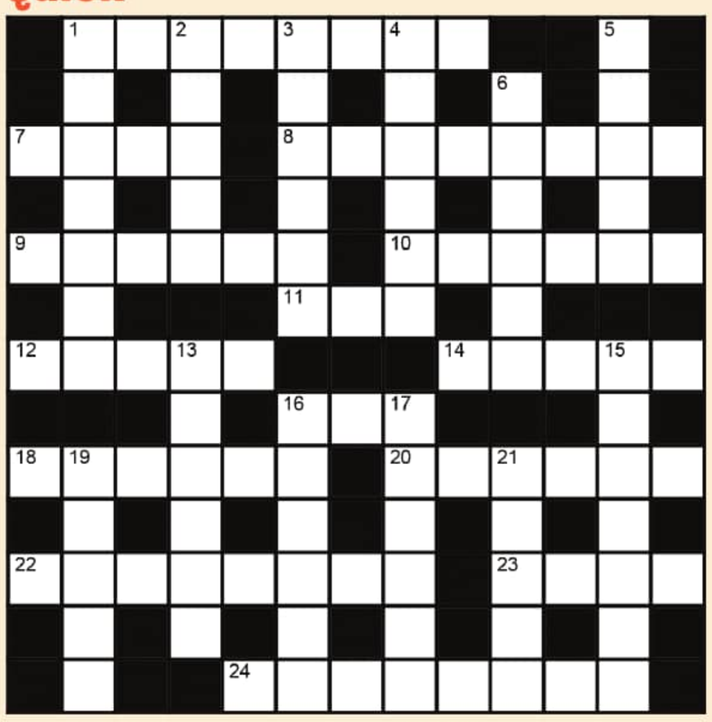


Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 ___ ___ of the day : lunch or dinner? (4,4)
7 At liberty (4)
8 Your days are ___ : a threat that one will die soon? (8)
9 Gatherings of witches (6)
10 Not factual or true; imaginary (6)
11 Pronoun for a girl (3)
12 One of hundredth of a rupee (5)
14 Beer glass (5)
16 Debussy heroine (3)
18 Fee (6)
20 Refrain, abstain or halt (6)
22 __ __ reason : makes complete sense? (6,2)
23 Wet earth (4)
24 They do not a prison (or a cage) make.... ! (4,4)

DOWN

1 One of Malleshwaram's main streets (7)
2 Galsworthy heroine (5)
3 Victorian university (6)
4 Protective coat of metal (6)
5 Musical drama (5)
6 Found out (6)
13 Malay skirt (6)
15 Takes out a policy? (7)
16 Minor (6)
17 Abut or border on (6)
19 Despised (5)
21 Brazilian dance (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: H EQUALS G

CBGCAU SQO SJX URSQHRUT, URCOC DT XSURDXH MPTSEQUCEZ DX SQO ASJCO.

Linemaro

My heart skipped a beat when I saw you

Mindchow

Long engagements give people the opportunity of finding out each other's character before marriage, which is never advisable

Joke of the day

Even today, well brought-up English girls are taught by their mothers to boil all veggies for at least a month and a half, just in case one of the dinner guests turns up without his teeth

Loop

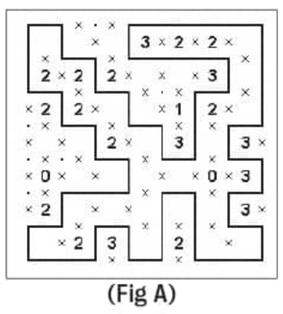
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

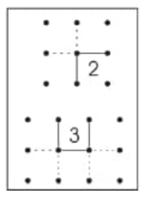
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

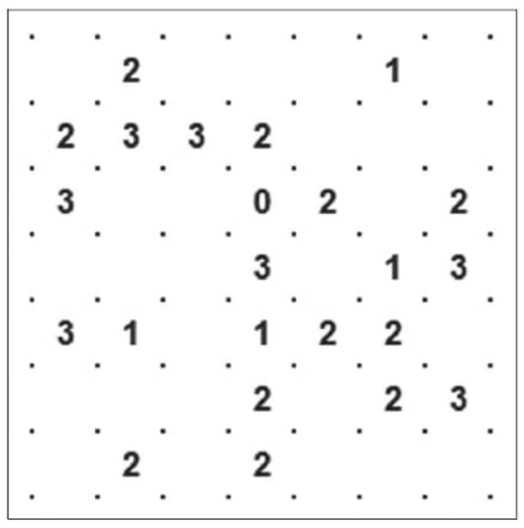
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



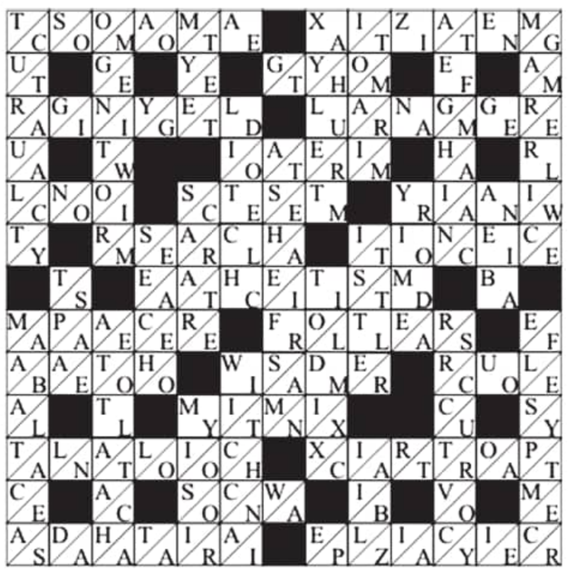
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				Y
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 At Lbs; 6 Gruel; 7 Rangy; 8 Rains; 9 C fort

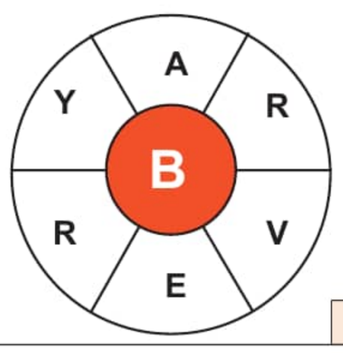
DOWN

1 Clan B; 2 Ulnar; 3 Or gag; 4 Fires; 5 St Try

Mensapuzzle

Which number comes next in this sequence?

9 - 7 - 8 - 6 - 7 - 5 - 6 - ?



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

07 Average; **08** Good; **10** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	7		1			4		
9		4	7					
		2			6	9		
1		6			7			9
		7		2		8		
8			4			3		6
		8	5			1		
					8	6		3
		5			3		4	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 8
1 3 3 7

Medium = 21
2 3 4 8

Hard = 48
2 3 5 7

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

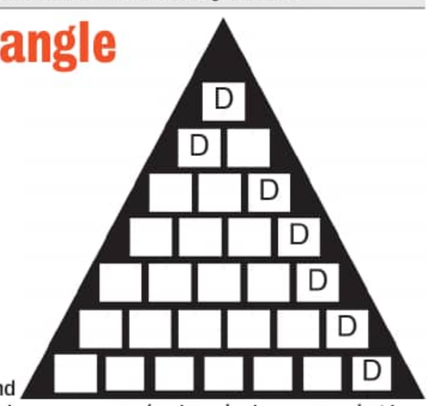
Differences: 1. Purse is larger. 2. Fingers are not showing. 3. Hair is different. 4. Earring is not showing. 5. Button is missing. 6. Necklace is different.

Riddler

You are on your way to visit your Grandma, who lives at the end of the valley. It's her birthday, and you want to give her the cakes you've made. Between your house and her house, you have to cross 7 bridges, and as it goes in the land of make believe, there is a troll under every bridge! Each troll, quite rightly, insists that you pay a troll toll. Before you can cross their bridge, you have to give them half of the cakes you are carrying, but as they are kind trolls, they each give you back a single cake. How many cakes do you have to leave home with to make sure that you arrive at Grandma's with exactly 2 cakes?

Alpha triangle

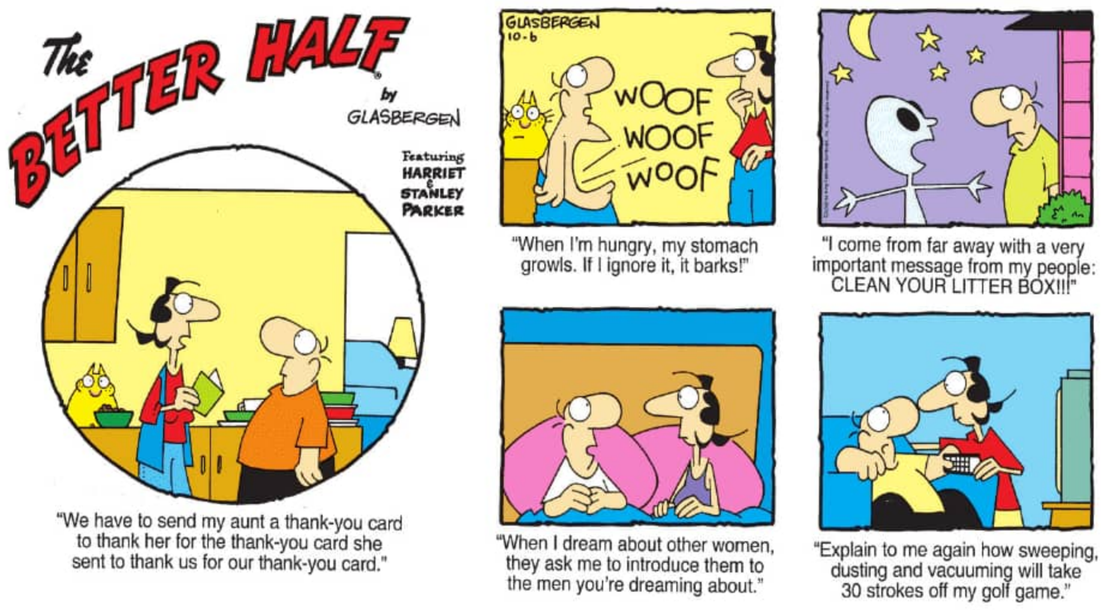
1 Vitamin type
2 Act
3 Bar
4 Promise
5 Used oars
6 Gloated
7 Cringed in fear



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"We have to send my aunt a thank-you card to thank her for the thank-you card she sent to thank us for our thank-you card."
GLASBERGEN 10-6
WOOF WOOF WOOF
"When I'm hungry, my stomach growls. If I ignore it, it barks!"
"I come from far away with a very important message from my people: CLEAN YOUR LITTER BOX!!!"
"When I dream about other women, they ask me to introduce them to the men you're dreaming about."
"Explain to me again how sweeping, dusting and vacuuming will take 30 strokes off my golf game."

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
HOW'S IT GOING, HAMMIE?
GREAT!
NOT ONE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION BROKEN SO FAR!
YOU'RE SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE.
FLASH GORDON
HE'S MUISE.
An' he's KAY.
WE'RE GUARD-HAWKS.
We're real good, too.
WHAT'S OUR SECRET, MUISE?
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE!
FAST AN' REGULAR.
So, we're MUISE an' KAY.
YEAH, WE'RE UP HERE MAKING SURE THOSE WORKERS KEEP THEIR EYES DOWN.
Some of 'em are on work release -- like THESE two.
An' the UNION birds don't like SCABS.
HEH! BAD FIGHT TO PICK.
Yeah, these scabs can SCRAP.
THE WORK CHIEF STARTS ON ABOUT HOW THE MARTIAL LAW IS HURTING THE WORKERS...
Time we shut him UP.
BUT THEY ACTUALLY DEFEND HIM!
LIKE WE'RE THE BAD GUYS HERE!
Then ADRANE breaks it up.
MOMMA. SHE'S GOT AN EYE FOR ME, Y'KNOW.
PSHH! Stay dreaming.
DAN SCHKADE 6-23-24
NEXT: THE HIGHEST TABLE

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

A shift in perspective allows you to forgive a past mistake and move forward freely. Workplace dynamics improve as an annoying roadblock is permanently removed by management. Financially, focus on building an emergency fund rather than seeking short-term gratification. Love flourishes when you celebrate your partner's independent achievements. Gentle walking will help soothe any lingering physical tension.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Your emotions may feel fiery today, making patience especially important around others. Small irritations could grow unnecessarily if ignored. Taking personal space, staying calm, and avoiding unnecessary conflict helps maintain peace and emotional balance beautifully.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Stay true to your values and personal beliefs today, even if outside opinions feel overwhelming. Trusting yourself confidently helps you avoid unnecessary pressure. Your individuality and inner strength guide you toward the right decisions always.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Speaking up against unfairness today creates positive change for both yourself and others around you. Trust your voice and express your thoughts honestly. Courageous communication strengthens your confidence while inspiring respect and meaningful understanding naturally.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today supports resolving misunderstandings and reconnecting peacefully with others through calm and rational conversations. Seeing situations from multiple perspectives helps create harmony naturally. Openness, patience, and understanding strengthen important emotional bonds beautifully now.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Mental stress may affect your physical energy today, making self-care especially important. Taking time to relax, breathe deeply, and recharge restores balance beautifully. Prioritising emotional wellbeing helps you maintain strength, focus, and lasting positivity.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You often support everyone else, but today reminds you to accept comfort from loved ones too. Emotional support helps restore your strength beautifully. Leaning on trusted people brings reassurance, healing, and much-needed inner peace now.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Letting go of draining relationships today creates space for healthier growth and emotional clarity. Surrounding yourself with supportive, uplifting people strengthens your focus beautifully. Protecting your energy allows you to move confidently toward your goals.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Clear communication becomes especially important today, helping others understand your feelings and intentions more easily. Expressing yourself openly strengthens relationships beautifully. Honest conversations create appreciation, connection, and deeper understanding with the people around you.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
A temporary wave of insecurity may appear today, though you remain deeply loved and appreciated by many. Focusing on comforting surroundings, peaceful moments, and uplifting thoughts helps restore your confidence and emotional balance beautifully now.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
A quieter day encourages you to delegate responsibilities and allow yourself genuine rest peacefully. Trusting others' efforts helps reduce pressure and teaches flexibility. Relaxation and acceptance restore your energy while keeping everything moving smoothly today.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today highlights the importance of maintaining meaningful connections instead of reaching out only when necessary. Thoughtful communication and consistent effort strengthen relationships beautifully. Appreciating people regularly helps create lasting trust, warmth, and emotional support naturally.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Keeping an open mind toward different perspectives benefits you greatly today. Stress or distractions may cloud your judgment temporarily, making trusted advice especially valuable. Listening carefully helps you make balanced decisions and avoid unnecessary confusion.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= 4a - [8 + { 12 / (3 * 2)}] = 6
= 4a - [8 + { 12 / 6} = 6
= 4a - [8 + 2] = 6
= 4a - 10 = 6
= 4a = 16
= a = 4

QUOTE UNCODE
Except our own thoughts, there is nothing absolutely in our power.

FAST FIVE

B	L	A	S	T
L	U	G	E	R
A	N	A	R	Y
N	A	R	I	S
C	R	O	F	T

BULL'S EYE
bare, barer, bear, berry, bevy, brave, braver, BRAVERY, bray, byre

STRIKE OUT

C	O	M	A	T	E		X	I	Z	A	N	G		
U	E		E		G	Y	M		F		A			
R	I	N	G	E	D		L	A	A	G	E	R		
A		T			I	T	E	M		H		L		
C	O	O		S	T	E	M		R	A	N	I		
Y		R	E	A	C	H		I	O	N	I	C		
S		A	T	H	E	I	S	M		B				
A	P	A	C	E		R	O	L	E	S		F		
B	A	T	H		W	A	D	E		C	U	E		
A		T		M	I	N	I		U			S		
T	L	A	L	O	C		C	A	R	R	O	T		
E		C		O	C	A		I		V		E		
S	A	H	A	R	A		P	L	A	Y	E	R		

QUICK

												D		
												E		
S	T	A	N	D	S	T	O	M	I	R	E			
A		O		S		J		U		A				
C	H	A	R	G	E		D	E	S	I	S	T		
		A								N				
P	A	I	S	A				S	T	E	I	N		
		S			H	E	R		N					
C	O	V	E	N	S		U	N	R	E	A	L		
	G		N		A		O		A		R			
F	R	E		N	U	M	B	E	R	E	D			
A		R		O		R		L		P				
M	A	I	N	M	E	A	L			O				

MENSA PUZZLE
4. The sequence is subtract 2, then add 1, etc.

RIDDLER
2: At each bridge you are required to give half of your cakes, and you receive one back. Which leaves you with 2 cakes after every bridge.

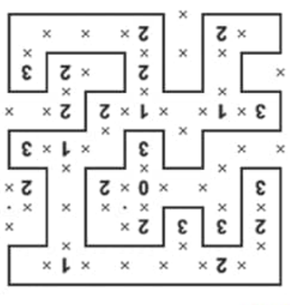
SUDOKU

6	7	3	1	9	2	4	8	5
9	8	4	7	3	5	2	6	1
5	1	2	8	4	6	9	3	7
1	4	6	3	8	7	5	2	9
3	5	7	6	2	9	8	1	4
8	2	9	4	5	1	3	7	6
7	3	8	5	6	4	1	9	2
4	9	1	2	7	8	6	5	3
2	6	5	9	1	3	7	4	8

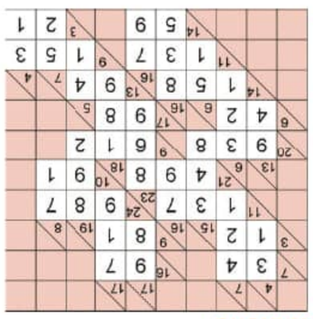
ALPHA TRIANGLE
D, Do, Rod, Word, Rowed, Crowed, Cowered.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 3 - 3 + 1 = 8
Medium
4 + 8 x 2 - 3 = 21
Hard
2 + 7 x 5 + 3 = 48

LOOP



KAKURO



Volume No 19, Issue No 024 RNI NO:KARENG/2007/22325 Published for the Proprietors, Metropolitan Media Company Ltd by Lokesh K.V. at No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011 and printed by him at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore–560 099 (Phones : Press : 080-22899999; Editorial : 080-40877666, Fax – 40877545, Registered Office: No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru–560 011, Email : mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com Editor : Ms. Seena Menon–responsible for selection of news under PRB Act. © Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.

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